

Minnesota's 4th District  
**E-Report!**

**Congresswoman Betty McCollum**

*"Serving Minnesota's Families"*



DECEMBER 19, 2003

**Hot News!**

**Ramsey County Receives \$499,290 Federal Grant**

Rep. Betty McCollum joined Minnesota Supreme Court Associate Justice James Gilbert and Ramsey County District Court Judge Joanne Smith this week to announce a Department of Justice federal grant for \$499,290 for the Ramsey County Substance Abuse Court. The Ramsey County District Court program improves the integration of chemical health services within the criminal justice system.

"I am pleased to announce this grant for the Ramsey County District Court," said Rep. McCollum. "We need local criminal justice partnerships like this one in our community to help reduce crime recidivism. The court's success at providing an efficient yet comprehensive approach to substance abuse can serve as a model for many other communities seeking effective approaches to this problem."

Research shows that substance abuse courts along with supportive programs and services significantly reduce crime recidivism. The Ramsey County Substance Abuse Court requires regular court appearances, substance abuse treatment, random testing, law-abiding behavior, employment or work toward a high school diploma if appropriate, pro-social activities and payment of restitution and all program fees. Individual case management is the foundation of the supervision component and requires intensive attention to offender needs.

Ramsey County District Court began its substance abuse court in 2002 to provide an opportunity for non-violent adult offenders to become alcohol and drug-free. The court program includes assistance with job readiness and training, education, housing and supportive networks in the community.



*Rep. Betty McCollum met with Fourth District residents Sayasith Yangsao, Jualy Yang and Saeng Kue Yang who will be leading a Hmong delegation to Laos in January 2004. They plan to visit family members and explore business as well as educational opportunities. Every year, nearly 35,000 Hmong and Lao Americans travel to Laos for tourism and to reunite with family members. Rep. McCollum is the author of legislation to normalize U.S. trade relations (NTR) with Laos (HR 3195).*

*In addition, McCollum convened the **Wat Resettlement Working Group** to facilitate plans and preparations for resettlement of certain eligible Lao and Hmong refugees living at a camp in central Thailand. McCollum was joined by representatives from social service agencies, county officials and Hmong community leaders to begin discussions about the settlement process.*

**Special Announcement**

Rep. McCollum's St. Paul and Washington offices will be closed **December 24, 25 and 26 for Christmas and December 31, 2003 and New Years Day.**

Contact Congresswoman Betty McCollum . . . [www.house.gov/mccollum/contact.html](http://www.house.gov/mccollum/contact.html)

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